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Approved For Release 2006/02/27 : CIA-RDP79-00849A000400040005-1

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REFERENCES:

ATTACHMENT TO L-1871
23 SEPTEMBER 1966
PAGE 1

STATUS VINH/DONG HOI RAIL LINE
NORTH VIETNAM

1. SIGNIFICANCE:

THIS BRIEFING BOARD PORTRAYS THE PRESENT STATUS OF THE VINH/DONG HOI RAIL LINE.

2. LOCATION:

THE RAIL LINE FROM VINH (1840N 10540E) TO DONG HOI (1729N 10636E) LIES IN THE SOUTHERN HALF OF NORTH VIETNAM AND FORMS A SEGMENT OF THE RAIL ROUTE FROM HA NOI SOUTH TO THE DEMILITARIZED ZONE (DMZ).

3. REMARKS:

THIS LINE IS A RESTORATION OF PART OF THE FORMER HA NOI-SAI GON LINE. ALTHOUGH ECONOMICALLY THE LEAST IMPORTANT OF THE NATION'S RAIL LINES, THIS LINE CONTRIBUTES SIGNIFICANTLY, WHEN OPERABLE, TO THE LOGISTIC CAPABILITY OF THE NORTH VIETNAMESE IN SUPPORT OF ACTIVITIES IN LAOS AND SOUTH VIETNAM.

4. COLLATERAL:

COLLATERAL REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE RAIL LINE FROM HA NOI SOUTH TO THE 17TH PARALLEL LAY UNSERVICEABLE FROM THE CLOSE OF THE FRENCH INDO-CHINESE WAR IN 1954 UNTIL 1961. IN THAT YEAR, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE CHINESE, RECONSTRUCTION BEGAN, AND BY MARCH OF 1965, A SINGLE METER GAUGE TRACK HAD REACHED A POINT APPROXIMATELY 60 NM NORTHWEST OF

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GROUP 1
Excluded from automatic
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NGA review(s) completed.

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5X1 REFERENCES:



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23 SEPTEMBER 1966
PAGE 2

DONG HOI (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF A 10 NM SECTION FROM VINH SOUTHWEST TO DUC THO). COMPLETION OF THIS SECTION, ALTHOUGH PLANNED, WAS HINDERED BY THE NECESSITY TO RECONSTRUCT TWO MAJOR BRIDGES SOUTHWEST OF VINH. INTERDICTION OF ONE OF THESE (THE TRAI HOI RAILROAD AND HIGHWAY BRIDGE OVER NGAN SAU,  IN APRIL OF 1965 SEEMED TO PRECLUDE SUCH RECONSTRUCTION. ANALYSIS OF AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY REVEALED THAT BY MARCH OF 1965 THE LINE HAD BEEN EXTENDED FROM VINH TO A NEW STATION AT BEN THUY, THE MOST IMPORTANT PORT IN THE SOUTH OF NORTH VIETNAM. FROM BEN THUY, FREIGHT COULD BE BARGED TO DUC THO TO CONTINUE BY RAIL, OR CONTINUE SOUTH BY ROAD OR COASTAL STEAMER..

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REPORTS ALSO INDICATED THAT BY THE BEGINNING OF 1965, A SIX-MILE SPUR OF TRACK HAD BEEN COMPLETED FROM A POINT 2.2 NM SOUTHEAST OF BAI DUC THON TO A JUNCTION WITH ROUTE 15, A KEY ROAD OVER WHICH MILITARY SUPPLIES WERE BEING SHIPPED AT THIS TIME INTO SOUTHERN LAOS VIA MU GIA PASS AND TO INFILTRATION ROUTES INTO SOUTH VIETNAM. PHOTOGRAPHIC EVIDENCE AT THE TIME INDICATED THAT THIS SPUR WAS MORE HEAVILY USED THAN THE MAIN LINE TO THE SOUTH. THE SPUR HAS, HOWEVER, SINCE BEEN INTERDICTED AND STANDS UNUSED AT PRESENT. RECENT REPORTS INDICATE THAT TRACK IS BEING REHABILITATED ON THE MAIN LINE SOUTH TOWARD THE DMZ, SUGGESTING THAT THE NORTH VIETNAMESE MAY BE CONSIDERING COMPLETING THIS LINK TO THE BORDER.

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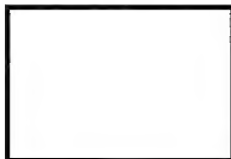
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ATTACHMENT TO L-1871
23 SEPTEMBER 1966
PAGE 3


5. MISSION READOUT:

5X1 PHOTOGRAPHY




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REVEALS

THE LINE NORTH OF VINH TO BE IN A SERVICEABLE CONDITION, LINKING THE TWO HALVES OF NORTH VIETNAM. SOUTHWARD, THE MAIN LINE FROM VINH IS REVEALED TO BE DISMANTLED TO A POINT LOCATED AT 1817N 10538E WHERE THE LINE CROSSES A MAJOR BRIDGE AT XOM HOAI. (XOM HOAI RAILROAD AND HIGHWAY BRIDGE OVER THE RAO NO,  INSET #2 SHOWS THE DESTROYED TRAI HOI RAILROAD AND HIGHWAY BRIDGE OVER NGAN SAU (1821N 10537E) AND PORTIONS OF THE INACTIVE RAIL LINE IN THIS SECTION BETWEEN VINH AND XOM HOAI.

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THE SPUR FROM VINH TO BEN THUY IS REVEALED TO BE SERVICEABLE AND ACTIVE. (INSET #1) THIS SPUR TERMINATES AT A RAIL-TO-WATER TRANSHIPMENT POINT AT THE BEN THUY PORT FACILITIES  ON THE BANK OF THE SONG CA (RIVER) NEAR A PARTIALLY SERVICEABLE OFFSHORE WHARF AT 1839N 10542E (INSET #7).

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MATERIALS FLOWING SOUTH FROM BEN THUY MAY BE BARGED UP THE SONG CA AND SONG LA GIANG, AND THEN UP THE NGAN SAU TO A WATER-TO-RAIL TRANSSHIPMENT POINT (INSET #3) AT 1817N 10538E. THIS POINT IS 0.5 NM EAST-SOUTHEAST OF THE PREVIOUSLY MENTIONED DESTROYED BRIDGE AT XOM HOAI. EFFORTS TO CONSTRUCT A BY-PASS BRIDGE (XOM HOAI RAILROAD

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ATTACHMENT TO L-1871
23 SEPTEMBER 1966
PAGE 4

5X1 BRIDGE EAST OVER RAO NO, [REDACTED] EAST OF THE INTERDICTED
STRUCTURE HAVE BEEN ABANDONED. A RAIL SPUR IS OBSERVED EXTENDING
FROM THE MAIN LINE (UTM WF680214) TO THE TRANSSHIPMENT POINT. A
STACK OF RAILS IS LOCATED ON THE RIVER BANK NEAR THE TERMINUS OF THE
RAIL SPUR, AND SEVERAL RIVER CRAFT, SOME CAMOUFLAGED, ARE OBSERVED
IN THE AREA.

EXTENSIVE EFFORT IS BEING MADE TO KEEP THE RAIL LINE OPERATIONAL
FROM THIS POINT SOUTHWARD TO THE PRESENT RAILHEAD AT 1753N 10601E
(INSET #6). THREE RAIL CABLE BRIDGES ARE UNDER CONSTRUCTION ON THE
RAIL BY-PASS BEING CONSTRUCTED NEAR THE DESTROYED THUONG PHONG TRANG
RAILROAD BRIDGE OVER THE RAO NAY [REDACTED] AT 1754N 10600E
(INSET #4). A FOURTH PROBABLE RAIL CABLE BRIDGE (NOT ILLUSTRATED) IS
LOCATED AT 1754N 10600E (UTM XEO75798). PROBABLE RAIL DECKING
APPEARS ON THE EAST BANK OF THE RIVER IN LINE WITH THE EAST APPROACH
OF THE BY-PASS BRIDGE. THREE CABLE TRAMWAY CROSSINGS ARE LOCATED
NORTH OF THE DESTROYED BRIDGE AND TWO RAIL CARS ARE NOTED ON THE
SOUTHWEST BANK OF THE RAO NAY.

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THE REHABILITATED RAILWAY FOLLOWS THE ROUTE OF THE LINE ABANDONED
AT THE CLOSE OF THE FRENCH-INDOCHINA WAR. THIS OLD LINE MAY BE
OBSERVED SOUTH OF THE RAILHEAD IN THE VICINITY OF 1746N 10615 E
(INSET #5).

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23 SEPTEMBER 1966
PAGE 5

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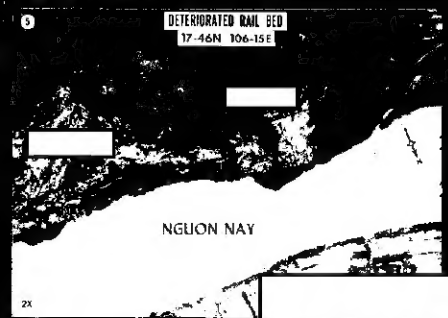
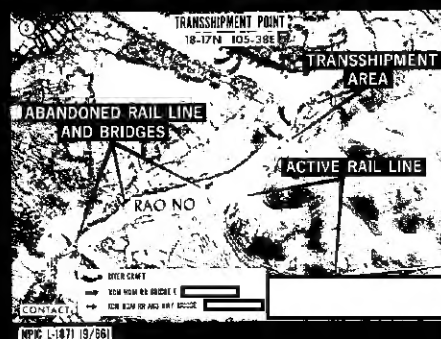
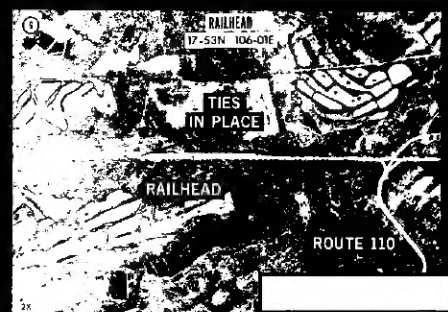
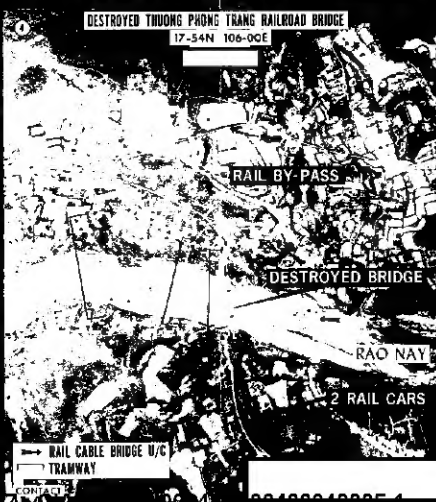
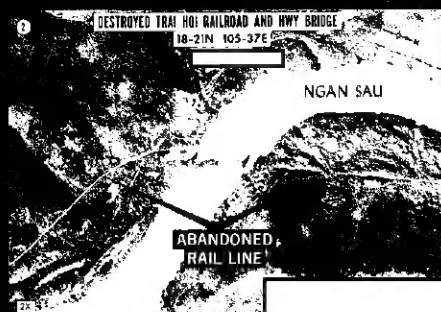
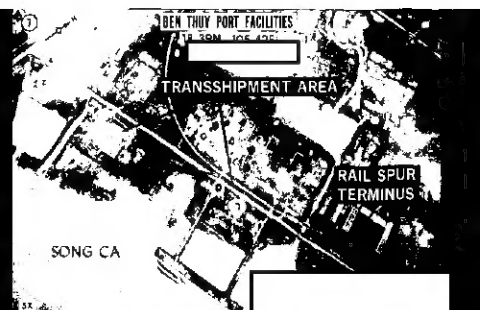
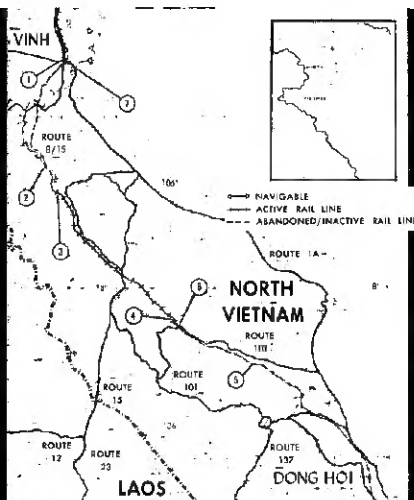
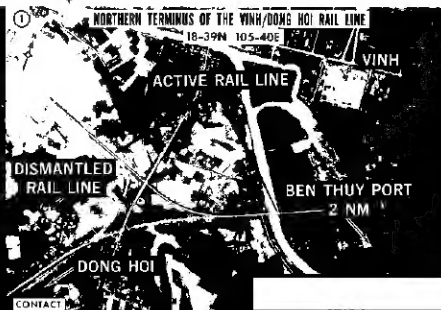
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